

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on official business and was unable to vote. I would have voted in favor of the motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 4810 (rollcall No. 408). I would have voted in favor of H.R. 4866 (rollcall No. 409).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, because of illness in the family, I was necessarily absent on the following votes and had I been present I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall No. 405—NAY on H.J. Res. 103; Rollcall No. 406—YEA on H.R. 3113; Rollcall No. 407—YEA on H.R. 4517; Rollcall No. 408—YEA on Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 4810; and Rollcall No. 409—YEA on H.R. 4866.

PERIODIC REPORT ON NATIONAL
EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO
TALIBAN IN AFGHANISTAN—
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC.
NO. 106-268)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Taliban (Afghanistan) that was declared in Executive Order 13129 of July 4, 1999.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.
THE WHITE HOUSE, July 17, 2000.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS REFORM
ACT OF 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today, I, along with the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) and the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), introduced the Corps of Engineers Reform Act of 2000.

The purpose of this legislation is to reform the project review and authorization procedures at the U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers and let the sun shine in through greater civilian oversight of Corps projects. Through this legislation we hope to persuade our fellow Members of Congress to act this session to clarify the mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and to restore the public's severely eroded trust in the Corps.

The Corps of Engineers is the primary Federal agency responsible for construction and maintenance of our Nation's water resources infrastructure. The Corps' civil works mission is large and vital, with projects in the areas of flood protection, navigation, irrigation, hydropower and recreation. In recent years, the Corps has assumed a more significant role in the areas of environmental protection and restoration.

Despite its historic reputation for professionalism and integrity, the Corps is at present an embattled agency. Over the past 6 months, the Corps has come under intense fire because of alleged improprieties in connection with its multiyear, \$50 million Upper Mississippi River-Illinois waterway system navigation study. Earlier this year, Congress also learned of efforts by top Corps officials to increase the Corps' civil works budget from its current level of \$4 billion a year to over \$6 billion by 2005.

Reports about the Corps' attempts to push through projects that lack a sound economic justification or that contain inadequate environmental provisions point to the breakdowns in the Corps' process for planning and approving water resources projects. This bill attempts to fix that problem, and with these reforms to lift the cloud of distrust and suspicion that currently hangs over the Corps of Engineers.

Last year, the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences published a report entitled *New Directions in Water Resources Planning for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*. This study was the product of 2 years of careful input and analysis by leading economists, engineers, environmental scientists, and water resource planners, including former high-level Corps of Engineers officials. The bill we introduced today builds on many of the key recommendations contained in the study.

Specifically, it clarifies congressional intent with respect to the Corps' broad mission in water resources planning. The bill states that, and I quote, "It is the intent of Congress that economic development and the environmental protection and restoration be coequal goals of water resources planning and development."

The bill creates new advisory and review procedures through the establishment of an environmental advisory board, an independent review panel, and a stakeholder advisory group.

The legislation also calls for the ongoing monitoring of the economic and

environmental results of all Corps projects exceeding \$25 million. The purpose of this monitoring program is to establish the baseline data needed to evaluate current and future Corps projects and to ensure that all Corps projects meet high standards of fiscal responsibility.

Finally, the bill seeks to ensure that environmental damages caused by projects are fully mitigated. Under this legislation, the Corps would also be required to mitigate damages to wildlife on a one-to-one basis.

The overarching purpose of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is to restore trust and confidence in the Army Corps of Engineers and to enable the Corps to get on with its important work on our Nation's rivers, lakes, coastlines and harbors. The best way to achieve this goal is to increase the level of transparency, and through transparency create greater accountability in the Corps' planning process, and to establish guidelines that strike a genuine balance between economic development and other social and environmental priorities.

In closing, I would urge my colleagues on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to work to build significant reforms into this year's reauthorization of the Water Resources and Development Act. I would like to thank the efforts of key environmental and taxpayer groups, such as American Rivers and Taxpayers for Common Sense for their support and interest in Corps reform.

Finally, I would invite other interested groups and citizens across the Nation to join in this effort to bring fiscal responsibility and environmental accountability to the Corps of Engineers.

TRIBUTE TO COAST GUARD
AUXILIARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to the men and women of the first southern district of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.

□ 1830

This all-volunteer Auxiliary played a major role in the recent July 4th festivities in the New York Harbor, which was celebrated during the International Naval Review and Military Salute Week.

These selfless civilian volunteers, many of whom live in my district, provided a safe boating atmosphere for the more than 30,000 boats that occupied New York Harbor for the festivities.

Out of the 193 Coast Guard vessels in New York Harbor, 65 are from the First Southern District of the Auxiliary.